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The Soviet Political Leadership: Implications of the April 1985 Plenum Changes (U)

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**THE SOVIET POLITICAL LEADERSHIP:
IMPLICATIONS OF THE APRIL 1985 PLENUM CHANGES (U)**




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Program Manager: 
**Internal Affairs Branch,
Military-Political Affairs Section**

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Co-author: 
**Directorate for Current Intelligence
Soviet/Warsaw Pact Division,
Military/Political Branch**

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PREFACE

(C) This report provides an analysis of the implications of the personnel changes made at the 23 April 1985 Central Committee plenum. It examines the extent to which these changes signal a smooth consolidation of power by the Gorbachev leadership. Also analyzed is the significance of the personnel shifts for the USSR's strategic leadership and Party-military relations. The foreign and domestic policy implications of the changes are also discussed.

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SUMMARY

(C) The 23 April 1985 Central Committee plenum featured five major political promotions. In an unusual but not unprecedented move, CC Secretaries Ligachev and Ryzhkov were promoted directly to full Politburo membership. KGB Chairman Chebrikov was elevated from candidate to full Politburo status. Minister of Defense Sokolov was appointed candidate Politburo member. Nikonov, the head of the RSFSR Ministry of Agriculture, was transferred to the CC Secretariat, probably to oversee agriculture.

(C) The net effect of these changes places Gorbachev in an advantageous position to consolidate his political position. The promotions of Ligachev and Ryzhkov to full Politburo membership, coupled with the elevation of Nikonov to the Secretariat, change the balance of power in both the Politburo and the Secretariat in Gorbachev's favor. They also place him in an advantageous position to tighten his hold over the regional party apparatus. Moreover, the new leadership team appears to share many of Gorbachev's domestic policy goals, making it much more likely that Gorbachev will be able to put his personal stamp on key decisions that will set Party leadership priorities over the next decade and beyond. These decisions are embodied in several major policy documents that will be ratified at the upcoming 27th Party Congress: the basic guidelines for the 12th five year plan, a new version of the Party program, and a revision of the Party rules. The content of these documents will provide an excellent indication of Gorbachev's ability to direct Party policy.

(C) The plenum leadership changes also have significance for the security sector. If Ligachev and Ryzhkov assume the roles of Gorbachev's informal deputies, they may also be given a role on the Defense Council--the USSR's top forum for strategic policymaking. These promotions are also likely to dilute the policymaking authority of Romanov, the CC Secretary for military issues.

(C) The promotion of KGB Chairman Chebrikov to full Politburo status will also affect leadership of the security sector. Chebrikov's promotion reflects a reversion to the pattern established in 1973. Although Chebrikov has no known political ties to Gorbachev, the latter may have backed his promotion in an effort to cement relations with the KGB. The KGB's support is crucial to Gorbachev's efforts to continue the anticorruption campaign begun under Andropov. Like Andropov, Gorbachev will probably use the anticorruption campaign to replace political opponents with trusted allies. The promotion of the KGB chief thus reflects leadership recognition of the KGB as an executor of top Party policy.

(C) Sokolov's appointment to candidate Politburo status probably represents a political compromise. The fact that Sokolov was denied full Politburo status at this time may reflect the Party's hesitancy to allow the military a strong voice in political decisionmaking through the Party's inner council. Sokolov, who has no known political ties with the General Secretary, apparently was accorded candidate status as a concession to the military and a recognition of its importance as an institution.

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1. INTRODUCTION: THE APRIL 1985 CENTRAL COMMITTEE PLENUM

(C) The 23 April 1985 Central Committee (CC) plenum was the first major leadership meeting following Mikhail Gorbachev's selection as Party General Secretary on 11 March. The plenum provided the new Party chief with an opportunity to outline upcoming domestic and foreign policy directions. The main focal point of the plenum, however, was personnel change. In an unusual but not unprecedented step, two members of the Central Committee Secretariat--Nikolay Ryzhkov and Yegor Ligachev--were promoted directly to full Politburo membership. Neither had served as candidate members. KGB Chairman and candidate Politburo member Viktor Chebrikov also joined the ranks of full Politburo members. Marshal Sergey Sokolov, who replaced Dmitriy Ustinov as Defense Minister in December, was promoted to candidate Politburo membership. The former head of the RSFSR Ministry of Agriculture, Viktor Nikonov, was transferred to the CC Secretariat.

(C) These five changes represent the most sweeping set of personnel shifts since the 27 April 1973 plenum which elevated three top government officials (the Minister of Foreign Affairs, the chairman of the KGB, and the Minister of Defense) to Politburo membership. In December 1983, in the waning months of Andropov's short tenure as Party leader, two candidate Politburo members (Solomentsev and Vorotnikov) were promoted to full membership; KGB chief Chebrikov became a candidate member; and Ligachev was promoted to the CC Secretariat. During Chernenko's 13-month tenure as General Secretary, however, there were no additions to either the Politburo or the Secretariat. The April 1985 plenum appointments, then, come after over a year's hiatus in top-level leadership changes.

2. LEADERSHIP REJUVENATION AND CONSOLIDATION OF POLITICAL POWERa. The Departing Kremlin "Old Guard"

(C) The post-Chernenko regime inherited an aging leadership elite. The trend toward older leaders began in the early 1970s. In March 1966, the average age of Politburo members was about 58. After 1971, however, the character of Brezhnev leadership began to change. By September 1978, the average age had risen to 68. In 1982, the inner core of the Kremlin "Old Guard" began to be depleted by death and retirement. Senior CC Secretary Suslov died in January, General Secretary Brezhnev in November. Andrey Kirilenko, another senior CC Secretary, was retired the same month. Arvid Pelshe, the head of the Party Control Committee, died in May 1983, General Secretary Yuriy Andropov in February 1984, and Defense Minister Dmitriy Ustinov in December 1984.

b. The Shrinking Politburo and Secretariat

(C) Many of the leadership vacancies created by the gradual passing of the "Old Guard" were not filled. When Gorbachev succeeded Konstantin Chernenko as General Secretary in March, the Politburo contained only 10 full members, in comparison with 13 or 14 during much of Brezhnev's tenure as Party chief.

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(C) The most glaring gaps in the leadership were those affecting the CC Secretariat. Although the Politburo is the pinnacle of the USSR's Party-government structure, setting general policy in virtually all areas, much of its substantive work is performed by the Secretariat--a committee of 10 or 12 full-time, Moscow-based Party officials, which meets about once a week. The Secretariat's primary concerns are Party operations and ideology. However, its most powerful political lever is its control over the CC nomenklatura--a list of the top 2,000 or 3,000 Party and government posts in the Soviet system. Hiring and firing of officials to fill these posts must be approved first by the Secretariat.

(C) The individual members who comprise the Secretariat each handle an informal portfolio of responsibilities (table 1). Unlike ministers in the government hierarchy, CC secretaries do not hold fixed positions with fixed sets of responsibilities. The division of responsibilities and authority among the secretaries is a fluid one, varying with the political power of the individual secretaries and the qualifications of other secretaries. CC Secretary Romanov, for example, emerged soon after his appointment to the Secretariat in June 1983 as the primary CC monitor for defense industry. He later expanded the scope of his portfolio to include other heavy industry issues, as well as selected aspects of internal security and control.

(C) CC secretaries draw on a staff of several thousand professionals organized into departments. Each of the 22 departments focuses on a specific part of the Soviet Government. The Defense Industry Department, for example, oversees and controls the activities of the nine defense product ministries as well as the Military Industrial Commission (VPK). The Defense Industry Department, in turn, answers to Romanov in his capacity as CC secretary for military issues.

(C) The responsibilities of an individual secretary can combine the position of head of one CC department with general supervisory authority over several others. Senior CC secretaries (those who are also full Politburo members) may also provide general guidance to one or more junior secretaries. Under Brezhnev, for example, senior CC Secretary Kirilenko exercised authority over economic strategy, cadres, and Party affairs. Two junior secretaries--Vladimir Dolgikh (who monitored heavy industry and energy) and Ivan Kapitonov (who at that time headed the Organizational Party Work Department)--reported to Kirilenko, who in effect functioned as Brezhnev's deputy for "general issues." Another senior secretary, Mikhail Suslov, had overall responsibility for ideology and foreign policy, supervising those junior CC secretaries (like Zimyanin) with responsibilities in these areas. Suslov operated, in effect, as Brezhnev's deputy for ideology and foreign relations.

(C) Under Chernenko, the roles formerly played by Kirilenko and Suslov were combined and handled by a single individual--Mikhail Gorbachev, who functioned during this period as Chernenko's unofficial second secretary. There was no evidence that Romanov, the only other CC secretary with full Politburo status at this time, had succeeded in expanding his range of responsibilities into areas, such as economic strategy, appropriate for the General Secretary's other informal "deputy." Moreover, no individual was

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Table 1
The Soviet Political Elite (U)

Name	Official Position	Responsibilities	Politburo Status	Age
Full Politburo Members				
Mikhail Gorbachev	General Secretary, CPSU CC (since April 1985)	General Leadership	Full (since 21 Oct 80) Candidate (1979-80)	54
Geydar Aliyev	First Deputy Chairman, USSR Council of Ministers (since Nov 82)	Transportation; Communications; Consumer Goods; Other Domestic Issues	Full (since 22 Nov 82) Candidate (1976-82)	62
Viktor Chebrikov	Chairman, Committee for State Security (KGB) (since Dec 82)	Secret Police	Full (since 23 April 85) Candidate (since 26 Dec 83)	62
Viktor Grishin	First Secretary, Moscow City Party (since 1967)	Moscow City Affairs	Full (since 9 April 71) Candidate (1961-71)	70
Andrey Gromyko	Minister of Foreign Affairs (since 1957); First Deputy Chairman, USSR Council of Ministers (since March 83)	Foreign Policy	Full (since 27 April 1973)	75
Yegor Ligachev	Secretary, CPSU CC (since 26 Dec 83); Chief, CC Organizational Party Work Dept. (since 29 Apr 83)	Cadres, Internal Party Affairs	Full (since 23 April 85)	64
Dinmukhamed Kunayev	First Secretary, CP of Kazakhstan (1960-2, 1964-present)	Kazakhstan Affairs	Full (since 9 Apr 71) Candidate (1966-71)	73
Grigoriy Romanov	Secretary, CPSU CC (since June 83)	National Security; Defense Industry; Machinebuilding	Full (since 5 March 1976) Candidate (1973-76)	62
Nikolay Ryzhkov	Secretary, CPSU CC (since 22 Nov 82); Chief, CC Econ. Dept. (since 20 Dec 82)	Economic Strategy and Planning	Full (since 23 Apr 85)	55
Vladimir Shcherbitsky	First Secretary, CC, CP of Ukraine (since 1972)	Ukrainian Affairs	Full (since 9 Apr 71) Candidate (1961-63; 1965-71)	67
Mikhail Solomentsev	Chairman, Party Control Committee (since 15 June 83)	Oversight of Party and Government Discipline	Full (since 26 Dec 83) Candidate (1971-83)	71
Nikolay Tikhonov	Chairman, USSR Council of Ministers (since 23 Oct 80)	General Domestic and Foreign Policy	Full (since 27 Nov 79) Candidate (1978-79)	80
Vitaliy Vorotnikov	Chairman, RSFSR Council of Ministers (since June 83)	RSFSR Affairs	Full (since 26 Dec 83) Candidate (June-Dec 83)	59
Candidate Politburo Members				
Petr Demichev	Minister of Culture (since 14 Nov 74)	Cultural Activities	Candidate (since 1 Nov 64)	67
Vladimir Dolgikh	Secretary, CPSU CC (since 18 Dec 72)	Heavy Industry; Energy	Candidate (since 24 May 82)	60
Vasilii Kuznetsov	First Deputy Chairman, Presidium, Supreme Soviet (since 7 Oct 77)	Presidium Activities	Candidate (since 3 Oct 77)	84
Boris Ponomarev	Secretary, CPSU CC (since 31 Oct 61); Chief, CC International Department (since 1954)	Foreign Policy	Candidate (since 19 May 72)	80
Eduard Shevardnadze	First Secretary, CC, CP of Georgia (since 1972)	Georgian Affairs	Candidate (since 27 Nov 78)	57
Sergey Sokolov	Minister of Defense (since Dec 1984)	Military Policy	Candidate (since 23 April 85)	73
Other Members of the CC Secretariat				
Ivan Kapitonov	Secretary, CPSU CC (since 6 Dec 65)	Light Industry and Consumer Goods	None	70
Viktor Nikonov	Secretary, CPSU CC (since 23 Apr 85)	Agriculture	None	56
Konstantin Rusakov	Secretary, CPSU CC (since 26 May 77) Chief, CC Liaison Dept. (since 18 Mar 77)	Foreign Affairs (Communist Bloc)	None	75
Mikhail Zimyanin	Secretary, CPSU CC (since 6 Mar 76)	Culture and Propaganda	None	70

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named to take over Gorbachev's former responsibilities in the agro-industrial area.

(C) Chernenko's death and Gorbachev's assumption of the General Secretary post left an even larger gap on the Secretariat. The need for a CC secretary specializing in agriculture remained. Additionally, there was no senior secretary handling the ideology/foreign policy role once filled by Suslov. Nor was there an individual filling the economic strategy/cadre/Party operations role once fulfilled by Kirilenko. These gaps probably intensified pressures for top-level personnel change.

c. The Secretariat Promotions

(1) Introduction

(C) Gorbachev and his political allies undoubtedly were anxious to take advantage of the leadership vacancies to elevate their own supporters. The three individuals promoted to fill the vacancies on the Secretariat effectively shift the balance of power on the Politburo and Secretariat in Gorbachev's favor, placing him in an advantageous position to consolidate his political power in both the Party and government apparatus.

(2) Ryzhkov

(C) The Gorbachev leadership promoted CC Secretary Nikolay Ryzhkov (55) directly to full Politburo membership, bypassing several older CC secretaries with far longer tenure. Ryzhkov, a former plant manager, was promoted to the Secretariat in November 1982 soon after Andropov's selection as Party leader. His appointment represented a departure from the previous pattern of choosing CC secretaries primarily from officials in the Party's regional apparatus or from the CC staff itself. Ryzhkov had spent his entire career in the government hierarchy, working his way up from shop foreman to director of the Ural Heavy Machine Building Plant in Sverdlovsk. In 1975, Ryzhkov was transferred to Moscow to work as first deputy minister of the Heavy and Transport Machine Building Ministry. In January 1979, he was named a first deputy chairman of Gosplan, with apparent responsibilities for the machine-building sector.

(C) Ryzhkov, an apparent Andropov ally, was appointed to the Secretariat in 1982. Within the Secretariat, Ryzhkov became chief of a newly reorganized Economic Department, which supervises industrial cadre policy and the implementation of economic reorganization in industry.

(C) Ryzhkov will undoubtedly assume a more powerful role under Gorbachev. His responsibilities may be expanded to include overall economic policy. He may also assume the role of Gorbachev's deputy for economic issues, supervising the other CC secretaries involved in economic management. In this case, he is likely to relinquish his post as chief of the Economic Department. He would, of course, retain authority over the activities of this department as part of his larger economic responsibilities. In this capacity, Ryzhkov will undoubtedly take the lead in preparing the five-year plan directives--a document which lays out overall economic priorities and Party economic strategy for the next 5 years.

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(3) Ligachev

(C) Like Ryzhkov, Yegor Ligachev (64) was promoted directly to full Politburo membership. An engineer by training, Ligachev began his career with a series of engineering posts at an aircraft building factory. He then transferred to the regional Party and government apparatus in Novosibirsk. In 1961, he was brought to Moscow to serve in the Central Committee staff. In 1965, Ligachev was transferred back to the regional Party apparatus, this time to serve as the Party chief in Tomsk. After nearly 18 years on this position, he was brought back to Moscow in April 1983 to head the CC Organizational Party Work Department. This department is one of the largest and most important in the CC staff. It is responsible for maintaining Party leadership control over the entire Party apparatus. It supervises the day-to-day activities of the republic and local Party organizations and plays a key role in personnel assignments. As department chief, Ligachev was in a position to manipulate cadre changes in the regional Party hierarchy. His authority was enhanced further in December 1983, when he was appointed to the CC Secretariat. He retained his hat as department chief, assuming somewhat broader responsibilities in the area of cadre policy and Party affairs.

(C) As a senior Party secretary, Ligachev's authority will probably expand further. One early indication of his expanding role is his unusually high status at the leadership lineup during the May Day celebrations. Within the CC Secretariat, Ligachev is likely to continue to supervise Party cadres, but may be given additional responsibilities, such as ideology. He has some previous experience in this field, having served in the early 1960s as deputy head of the propaganda department within the CC's Bureau for the RSFSR. In any case, Ligachev is likely to play a key role in drafting the new versions of the Party program and rules.

(4) Nikonov

(C) Nikonov (56), an agricultural specialist by training, moved into Party work in 1958, when he was named as deputy chairman of the agricultural department in the Krasnodar Party apparatus. Like Ligachev, Nikonov spent much of his early career in the regional party apparatus. In 1979, he was transferred to the government hierarchy in Moscow, assuming the post of deputy Minister of Agriculture. In January 1983, Nikonov was made minister of the republic-level RSFSR Ministry of Agriculture.

(C) Within the CC Secretariat, Nikonov will probably inherit the agricultural portfolio left vacant by Gorbachev. As CC Secretary for agriculture, Gorbachev had gradually expanded the scope of his position to cover not just farm policy but programs affecting the infrastructure of supporting organizations as well. It is not clear how these responsibilities will be divided in the current leadership.

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f. Implications for Gorbachev's Consolidation of Power

(1) Introduction

(C) Gorbachev is now in a relatively advantageous position to consolidate his political power. First, the three promotions involving the CC Secretariat will probably result in a Politburo and Secretariat more amenable to supporting Gorbachev's policy and personnel preferences. Second, the Ligachev promotion lays the basis for Gorbachev to tighten his hold over the regional Party apparatus. Third, the Gorbachev leadership can expect several other top posts to become vacant within the next several years as other aging members of the Kremlin Old Guard die or retire for health reasons, providing him with opportunities to place trusted allies in key positions.

(2) The Changing Political Power Balance

(C) While the exact nature of the relationship between the Party chief and these three men is not known, available evidence suggests that these changes will be highly beneficial to the General Secretary. Both Ligachev and Ryzhkov have associated themselves closely with domestic policies actively promoted by Gorbachev; and both were elevated to higher rank under Andropov, with whom Gorbachev is reported to have been closely linked. Additionally, the presence of both men at Gorbachev's RSFSR Supreme Soviet election speech in February 1985 served to underline a political alliance between them. Moreover, the promotions of Ligachev and Ryzhkov to full Politburo membership means that there are now four senior CC Secretaries. Gorbachev will undoubtedly seek to use Ligachev and Ryzhkov to counterbalance Romanov.

(C) It is also important to note that, in choosing Ligachev and Ryzhkov for promotion, the leadership elite passed over several CC secretaries with much longer tenure and reported links to the Chernenko faction. In this connection, Vladimir Dolgikh, a candidate Politburo member who has been a CC Secretary for over a decade, was reportedly slated for promotion to full Politburo status to serve as a counterweight to Ryzhkov and Ligachev. The fact that Dolgikh's promotion did not occur at the plenum suggests that Gorbachev and his allies were able to resist pressures in this direction.

(C) Similarly, while the newly elevated CC Secretary Nikonov is not known to be a Gorbachev protege, his appointments in the agricultural sector occurred during a period of time when Gorbachev was supervising agriculture. Because this role involves control over key appointments in the agricultural management system, it is highly unlikely that Nikonov would have received these appointments without Gorbachev's support. The addition of Nikonov to the Secretariat will thus serve to enhance Gorbachev's control of this critical policymaking body.

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(3) Prospects for Change in the Regional Party Hierarchy

(C) Ligachev's promotion is of particular significance for Gorbachev's efforts to consolidate his hold over the regional Party apparatus. Personnel choices in the regional Party apparatus are closely controlled by the Central Committee Organizational Party Work Department. The promotion of department head Ligachev--an apparent Gorbachev ally--to the Politburo also provides the General Secretary with the possibility of freeing Ligachev from the department chief's post and replacing him with a trusted political associate, thus tightening his hold over cadres policy even further. Gorbachev will undoubtedly try to use both Ligachev and the Organizational Party Work Department to replace some of the less effective regional leaders with more dynamic officials, while ensuring the promotion of political allies whose views and managerial style are more compatible with his own.

(C) Gorbachev and his allies will have greater opportunities to effect such changes during the series of local Party conferences held to "elect" delegates to the upcoming 27th Party Congress, scheduled for 25 February 1986. In November and December 1985, district and city Party bodies will hold "election" conferences. Similar events at the oblast level are scheduled for December 1985 and January 1986, and at the republic level in January and early February 1986.

(C) Moreover, Gorbachev will reportedly support a shift from "vertical" promotions (the practice of promoting officials within a single region) to "horizontal" promotions (promotion of individuals from different regions or from the Party and government apparatus in Moscow). This strategy is designed to break down regional loyalties and to overcome corruption fostered by long-entrenched local Party leaders.

(4) Generational Change and Power Consolidation

(C) Despite the recent changes, the average age of Politburo members is 67 years old--still quite high. This means that over the next several years, the Gorbachev leadership will have additional opportunities to fill leadership vacancies. For example, Chairman of the Council of Ministers Tikhonov--rumored to be slated for replacement by reported Gorbachev ally and current RSFSR leader Vorotnikov--is 80 years old, as is CC Secretary Boris Ponomarev, who has run the CC International Department for over three decades. Gorbachev will surely try to fill these posts as they become vacant with officials who owe their positions to him and with whom he has close political ties. Gorbachev and his allies will also try to maneuver opponents from existing post and replace them with supporters. Some of these appointments, however, may be political compromises, since other Politburo members will try to advance their own allies in order to counter moves that will diminish their own power.

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3. LEADERSHIP OF THE SECURITY APPARATUSa. Romanov's Role as CC Secretary for Military Issues

(C) The leadership changes also have significance for the security sector. The top forum for strategic decisionmaking is the USSR Defense Council. Gorbachev, by virtue of his post as General Secretary, probably serves as chairman. Romanov, by virtue of his role as CC Secretary for military issues, was probably made a member sometime subsequent to his appointment to the Secretariat in June 1983. Romanov apparently has used his position both to elevate his own political allies to defense industrial posts and to promote policies favored by defense industrialists, such as the introduction of automated, integrated manufacturing technologies.

(C) Romanov's authority within the Defense Council was probably enhanced by the death of Defense Minister Ustinov in December 1984. The removal of Ustinov, a senior Politburo member, and his replacement as Defense Minister by Sergey Sokolov--a career military professional--left Romanov in an advantageous position to exert strong influence on Defense Council decisions. The elevation of Ligachev and Ryzhkov to full Politburo membership raises the possibility that these two men will assume the critical "deputy" roles on the CC Secretariat once filled by Suslov (for ideology and foreign policy) and Kirilenko (for economic strategy and cadres). Both of these portfolios apparently involve a role in Defense Council deliberations. If so, Romanov's ability to shape Defense Council decisions may be significantly reduced. Their promotions, moreover, dilute his previous status as the only other senior CC secretary (other than Gorbachev) on the Politburo and Secretariat. This, in turn, will serve to decrease his political power within these two bodies, particularly if (as seems likely) Gorbachev intends to use Ligachev and Ryzhkov as a counterweight to Romanov.

b. The Chebrikov Promotion

(C) Less clear is the impact on Romanov's political authority of the Chebrikov and Sokolov promotions. Chebrikov (62), like many men in the Kremlin elite, an engineer by training, moved into Party work in the early 1950s. He later served in the Party apparatus in Dnepropetrovsk, where he apparently developed strong ties with Brezhnev, who brought him to the KGB in 1967, reportedly to counterbalance Andropov (at that time KGB Chairman). Chebrikov, however, was reportedly able to establish a smooth working relationship with Andropov, and was elevated to the top KGB job in December 1982, replacing Fedorchuk (who was transferred to the top job in the Ministry of Internal Affairs). A year later, in the final months of Andropov's tenure as Party chief, Chebrikov was promoted to Army General and elevated to candidate Politburo status.

(C) It is unclear how Chebrikov's elevation will affect Romanov's authority. Romanov's mission as CC Secretary probably included oversight of selected activities of the Administrative Organs Department--a department which monitors judicial and police organizations, as well as selected activities of the Ministry of Defense and the KGB. Romanov's current ability

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to influence decisions affecting the KGB may be decreased by Chebrikov's elevated status. On the other hand, although there is no known political patronage tie between the two men, Romanov may have favored the move because it enhanced the prestige of the security sector.

(C) The Chebrikov promotion probably reflects an effort by the Gorbachev leadership to cement its relationship with the KGB. While Chebrikov himself is not known to be either a protege or close political ally of General Secretary Gorbachev, the KGB's support is crucial to Gorbachev's efforts to continue the anticorruption campaign begun under Andropov. Like Andropov, Gorbachev will probably use the anticorruption campaign as a vehicle to replace political opponents with trusted allies, as well as a means to remove ineffective or corrupt administrators. The promotion of the KGB chief thus reflects leadership recognition of this organization as an executor of top Party policy.

(C) Chebrikov's promotion also represents a pattern of KGB leadership presence on the Politburo, which began in the Brezhnev era. Party leadership policy regarding KGB and MOD leadership presence on the Politburo was inconsistent during the immediate postwar decades. Under Stalin, the head of the security apparatus held either candidate or Politburo status for a brief period of time (table 2). In the post-Stalin era, however, the top official in the security apparatus was excluded from the top leadership body. This pattern began to shift in 1967, when Andropov was elevated to candidate status soon after his appointment to head the KGB. Andropov was promoted to full Politburo status in 1973. When he was transferred to the CC Secretariat in May 1982, the KGB lost its Politburo presence; and Andropov's successor Fedorchuk (a career police professional who held the position from May to December 1982) was not elevated to the Politburo.

(C) Chebrikov, however, was promoted to candidate membership only a year after his KGB appointment. His April 1985 elevation to full membership represents a reversion to the pattern established in 1973. Chebrikov's promotion also reflects a larger trend of increasing KGB stature that began in the Brezhnev era. The KGB leadership at republic level has also enjoyed increasing presence on republic Party leadership bodies. The Chebrikov elevation to full Politburo status thus reflects an institutionalization of KGB representation on key Party leadership bodies.

c. The Sokolov Politburo Appointment

(C/NF/WN) Unlike Chebrikov, a political figure who began his career in the regional Party apparatus, Sokolov (73) is a career military professional. He had extensive command and staff experience both during and after World War II. In 1964, he was assigned as first deputy commander of the Leningrad Military District and promoted to commander of the District the following year. During that period, he reportedly began an association with Romanov, who was working then as second secretary of the Leningrad oblast Party committee--a post that traditionally entails supervision of security matters in the oblast. Sokolov was selected to be a first deputy Minister of Defense in 1967 and promoted to Marshal of the Soviet Union a decade later.

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Table 2

Committee for State Security (KGB):
Presence on Politburo (U)

<u>Name*</u>	<u>Background</u>	<u>Tenure</u>	<u>Politburo Status</u>
L. P. Beria	Police/political	1938-Feb 41 July 1941-43 March-June 1953	Cand 1939-46 Member 1946-53
V.N. Merkulov	Police	Feb-July 41 1943-46	---
N.S. Abakumov	Police	1946-1951	---
S.D. Ignatyev	Political	1951- March 1953	Member Oct 52- April 53
S.N. Kruglov	Police	June 1953- March 1954	
I.A. Serov	Police	1954-58	---
A.N. Shelepin	Political	1958-61	Member Nov 1964 - April 75
V. Y. Semichastniy	Political	1961-67	---
Yu. V. Andropov	Political	1967- May 82	Cand 1967-73 Member 1973-death
V.V. Fedorchuk	Police	May-Dec 1982	---
V.M. Chebrikov	Political/police	Dec 82- present	Cand Dec 83 - Apr 85 Member since Apr 85

*This list includes heads of the KGB (Committee for State Security, March 1954 to present), NKGB (People's Commissariat for State Security, February to July 1941, and April 1943 to March 1946), and MGB (Ministry for State Security, March 1946 to March 1953), as well as those of predecessor organizations which combined the missions of the current KGB and the current Ministry of Interior: NKVD (People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs, July 1934 to February 1941, July 1941 to April 1943) and MVD (Ministry of Internal Affairs, March 1953 to March 1954).

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(S) The selection of Sokolov to replace Ustinov as Defense Minister in December 1984 probably reflected the Party leadership's desire for a compliant, noncontroversial Defense Minister. Ustinov, by contrast, was a Party man who had held top defense policy positions for over four decades, serving under six Party leaders. In the late Brezhnev era, his political authority increased; and he reportedly played a key role in the post-Brezhnev succession. Ustinov's replacement by a career military officer provided the Politburo with a Defense Minister unlikely to challenge the party leadership's supremacy in determining defense policy. Moreover, his candidacy may well have been supported by Romanov.

(C) Sokolov's assignment to the top Defense Ministry post placed before the Politburo the difficult issue of whether to accord Politburo status to a professional soldier. The pattern of Defense Ministry presence on the Politburo began in the Brezhnev era. In the immediate postwar period, the pattern was an inconsistent one (table 3). Other than Bulganin (a political figure who held the top Defense Ministry post in the late 1940s and again between 1953 and 1955) and Zhukov (who was promoted to full Politburo membership just prior to his ouster), none of the postwar Defense Ministers had Politburo status. This pattern changed in 1973, when Defense Minister Grechko was promoted to full Politburo status. Ustinov had already been made a full Politburo member several weeks prior to his selection as Defense Minister in April 1976. Following Ustinov's death in December 1984, the MOD temporarily lost its Politburo status. Denial of Politburo status to the new Defense Minister, particularly in light of Chebrikov's promotion to full Politburo membership, would have represented a significant downgrading of the military.

(C) The Gorbachev leadership may well have favored maintaining a relatively low political profile for the professional military, continuing a trend which began during Chernenko's tenure as Party chief. Marshal Ogarkov's abrupt ouster from the Chief of the General Staff post in September 1984 was probably a signal of leadership intent to reassert Party control over the military. The military's low profile role continued during the Chernenko funeral. According to Sokolov candidate status may have been a political concession. In other words, his appointment, along with the return of the military to the May Day leadership lineup and the appearance of an authoritative statement on arms control issued in his name in early May, indicates an acknowledgment by the Gorbachev leadership of the importance of the institution that Sokolov represents. The Defense Minister's advanced age suggest that he may be seen as a transitional figure; the status of the military under Gorbachev will be more clearly revealed when he is replaced.

(C/NF/WN) The impact of the Sokolov promotion on Romanov's role is not clear.

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Table 3

Ministry of Defense (MOD):
Presence on Politburo (U)

<u>Name</u>	<u>Background</u>	<u>MOD Tenure</u>	<u>Politburo Status</u>
N.A. Bulganin*	Political	March 47- March 49 March 53- Feb 55	Cand 46-48 Member 48-58
A.M. Vasilevskiy	Military Professional	March 49- March 53	---
G.K. Zhukov	Military Professional	Feb 55- Oct 57	Cand Feb 56-June 57 Member June-Oct 57
R.Ya. Malinovskiy	Military Professional	Oct 57- March 67	---
A.A. Grechko	Military Professional	Apr 67- Apr 76	Member 1973-76
D.F. Ustinov	Political (def industry)	Apr 76 Dec 84	Cand 65-76 Member 76-84
S.L. Sokolov	Military Professional	Dec 84- present	Cand April 85- present

*Held Deputy Chairmanship of USSR Council of Ministers concurrently with MOD post.

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4. CONCLUSIONSa. Implications for the Domestic Policy Agenda

(C) Gorbachev's efforts to replenish the party ranks and, in the process, to consolidate his political power base have put him in a better position to accomplish his domestic policy goals. The timing of Gorbachev's accession to the top Party post is particularly auspicious for this purpose, since preparations are now ongoing for the next Party Congress. Communist Party Congresses are scheduled every 5 years. The Congress generally rubberstamps the basic guidelines for the next five-year plan, which sets economic priorities and leadership goals and programs. In addition, the upcoming Congress will ratify a new version of the Party Program, which is a statement of long-term national goals. This document has not been updated since 1961. The Congress will also provide ritual approval for the revised version of the Party rules, which govern membership recruitment policy and internal Party operations. The process of formulating all three documents has been underway for some time. As Chernenko's deputy, Gorbachev has already had ample opportunity to influence their contents. The upcoming months will provide him with additional chances to put his personal stamp on these critical decisions.

(C) Gorbachev summarized his domestic policy agenda in his April 1985 plenum speech. It contained the basic elements of an ambitious program to improve the operation of USSR's economic system. While there is no evidence that Gorbachev favors any systemic economic change, such as an end to central planning or a radical expansion of private enterprise, he has long advocated more innovative approaches to maximizing the efficiency of the Soviet economic system. In fact, it appears that his appointment has caused an intensification of public discussion of Soviet economic problems and measures to deal with them.

(C) In his plenum speech, Gorbachev predictably stressed the need to reinvigorate the economy by improving discipline--a theme repeatedly stressed by former General Secretary Andropov. Gorbachev also pledged that the energy and agro-industrial programs would retain their high priority and that more resources would be allocated to the machinery sector to improve the technological level of Soviet industry. He also called for changes in the incentive system that would promote labor productivity; modifications of the economic management system in ways that would encourage managers to make better use of technological advances; a more efficient balance of centralized control and local initiative in economic planning; and further expansion of the district agro-industrial production associations (RAPOs)--an administrative arrangement designed to minimize disruptions caused by ministry parochialism. All of these measures are designed to improve economic efficiency without diluting party control.

(C) The personnel changes made at the April plenum provide Gorbachev with a leadership team that is far more likely to implement this domestic policy agenda. Ligachev and Ryzhkov are closely associated with programs of central concern to Gorbachev, namely cadre discipline, personal accountability of officials, and limited economic decentralization; and both

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have expressed views compatible with the General Secretary. Therefore, both men can be expected to support the General Secretary's efforts to incorporate these policies into the new five-year plan directives, program, and rules.

b. Implications for the Foreign and Military Policy Agenda

(C) By contrast, the plenum personnel changes are expected to have little direct effect on foreign and military policy. Gorbachev himself does not have an extensive background in foreign policy and has yet to give an indication that he has a strongly developed foreign and military policy agenda that differs substantially from that of his predecessors. Moreover, the Chebrikov and Sokolov appointments reflect more the leadership's acknowledgment of the KGB and military institutions than personal political alliances with Gorbachev.

(C) In the foreign policy area, the major innovation of the Gorbachev era appears to be style and not substance. Gorbachev has already assumed a far more demanding schedule of meetings with foreign officials than either Andropov or Chernenko; and his physical stamina and active role in foreign public relations has endowed the USSR's public diplomacy with new energy. Despite these dramatic shifts in tone and style, there is still no evidence of a major change in the USSR's basic foreign and military goals and strategies.

(C) In terms of military policy, Gorbachev's efforts to get the economy going again are likely to receive a strong positive response from the military leadership. Defense industries have probably not been insulated from the resource shortages which plague the Soviet economy; and Gorbachev's success at producing even marginal improvements in economic performance will benefit military programs.

c. Prospects for Power Consolidation

(C) Although the plenum changes place Gorbachev in a more advantageous position to tighten his political grip over the Party and government apparatus, the process of power consolidation is by no means over. Gorbachev will also try to take over the position of Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet, the titular head of state post, which Chernenko's death also left vacant. Andropov waited only 7 months and Chernenko only 2 months before assuming this position. Given this precedent, Gorbachev's failure to gain this post quickly would constitute a serious political setback for the General Secretary. His assumption of the post could be announced at the next session of the Supreme Soviet--the USSR's rubberstamp parliament--which could meet sometime in the early summer.

(C) Gorbachev will also try to ensure early public acknowledgment of his role as Chairman of the USSR Defense Council. Although Gorbachev probably already holds this post by virtue of his role as General Secretary, he will almost certainly wish to publicize this role, perhaps as part of a larger effort to promote his ties with the military. Both Andropov and Chernenko were rapidly acknowledged in this role. In both cases, the acknowledgment was made by a Defense Ministry official and occurred in connection with a military-related event. The same will probably apply to the public acknowledgment of Gorbachev's Defense Council role.

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